



THE LATE HON SAMUEL CHIPMAN.

The First Fight with the Spanish Armada.



DIRECTLY off Ramhead, the two fleets were engaged. The air through the night had been light from the west. The water was smooth. At five o'clock on the Sunday morning, July 31st, eleven large vessels were seen from the San Martin, three miles to leeward, just off the Mewstone, manœuvring to recover the wind, which was beginning to freshen. Forty others were counted between the Armada and the land to the west of the Sound. The squadron first seen consisted of the Queen's ships under Lord Howard; the others were Drake and the privateers. The breeze rose rapidly. The Duke flew the consecrated standard,

and signalled to the whole fleet to brace round their yards and hold the wind between the two English divisions. Howard, however, with apparent ease, went on to windward and joined Drake; both of them then stood out to sea behind the whole Armada, firing heavily into Recalde and the rearward Spanish squadron as they passed. Recalde tried hard to close, but Sir John Hawkins had introduced new lines into the construction of the English ships. The high castles at poop and stem had been reduced, the length increased, the beam diminished. They could sail, perhaps, within five points of the wind. They showed powers, at any rate, entirely new to Recalde, for they seemed to be able to keep at any distance which they pleased from him. They did not try to break his line or capture detached vessels. With their heavy guns, which he found to his cost to be of weightier metal, and to carry farther than his own, they poured their broadsides into him at their leisure, and he could make no tolerable reply. Alonzo de Leyva and Oquendo, seeing that Recalde was suffering severely, went to his assistance, but only to experience themselves the effects of this novel method of naval combat and naval construction. To fight at a distance was contrary to Spanish custom, and was not held worthy of honourable men. But it was effective; it was perplexing; it was deadly. The engagement lasted on these conditions through the whole Sunday forenoon. The officers of the Armada did all that gallant men could achieve. They refused to recognize where the English superiority lay till it was forced upon them by torn rigging and shattered hulls. Recalde's own ship fired a hundred and twenty shot, and it was thought a great thing. But the English had fired five to the Spanish one, and the effect was the greater because, as in Rodney's action at Dominica, the galleons were crowded with troops, among whom shot and splinter had worked havoc. The Castilians and Biscayans were brave enough; there were no braver men in the world; but they were in a position where courage was no use to them. They were perplexed and disturbed; and an officer present who describes the scene observes that "este dia mostraronse de nuestra Armada algunos oficiales medrosos"—this day some of the authorities of our fleet showed cowardice. The allusion was perhaps to the Duke, who had looked on and done nothing.

No prizes were taken. Drake and Howard understood their business too well to waste life upon single captures. Their purpose was to harass, shatter, and weaken the entire Armada, as opportunity might offer, with the least damage to themselves, till shot and weather, and the casualties likely to occur under such conditions, had reduced the fleets to something nearer to an equality. Tactics so novel perplexed the Spaniards. They had looked for difficulties, but they had counted with certainty on success if they could force the English into a general engagement. No wonder that they were unpleasantly startled at the result of the first experiment.

The action, if such it could be called when the Armada

had been but a helpless target to the English guns, lasted till four in the afternoon. The south-west wind was blowing up, and the sea was rising. The two fleets had by that time driven past the opening into the Sound. The Duke could not have gone in if he had tried, nor could De Leyva himself, under such circumstances, have advised him to try; so, finding that he could do nothing, and was only throwing away life, he signalled from the San Martin to bear away up Channel. The misfortunes of the day, however, were not yet over. The Spanish squadrons endeavoured to resume their proper positions, De Leyva leading and Recalde covering the rear. The English followed leisurely two miles behind, and Recalde's vessel had suffered so much in the engagement that she was observed to be dropping back, and to be in danger of being left alone and overtaken. Pedro de Valdez, in the Capitana of the Andalusian squadron, one of the finest ships in the fleet, observing his old comrade in difficulties, bore up to help him. After such a day, the men, perhaps, were all of them disturbed, and likely to make mistakes in difficult manœuvres. In turning, the Capitana came into collision with the Santa Catalina and broke her bowsprit; the fore-topmast followed, and the ship became an unmanageable wreck. She had five hundred men on board, besides a considerable part of the money which had been sent for the use of the fleet. To desert such a vessel, and desert along with it one of the principal officers of the expedition, on the first disaster, would be an act of cowardice and dishonour not to be looked for in a Spanish nobleman. But night was coming on. To bear up was to risk a renewal of the fighting, for which the Duke had no stomach. He bore Don Pedro a grudge for having opposed him at Corunna, when he had desired to give up the expedition; Diego Florez, his adviser, had also his dislike for Don Pedro, and, to the astonishment of everyone, the signal was made that the fleet was not to stop, and that Don Pedro was to be left to his fate. De Leyva and Oquendo, unable to believe the order to be serious, hastened on board the San Martin to protest. The Duke hesitated; Diego Florez, however, said that to wait would be to risk the loss of the whole fleet, and by Diego Florez Philip had directed the Duke to be guided. Boats were sent back to bring off the treasure and the crew, but in the rising sea boats could do nothing. Don Pedro was deserted, overtaken, and of course captured, after a gallant resistance. The ship was carried into Dartmouth, and proved a valuable prize. Besides the money, there was found a precious store of powder, which the English sorely needed. Among other articles was a chest of swords, richly mounted, which the Duke was taking over to be presented to the English Catholic peers. Don Pedro himself was treated with the high courtesy which he deserved, to be ransomed at the end of a year, and was spared the ignominy of further service under his extraordinary commander-in-chief.—*J. A. Froude in Longman's Magazine.*

Willing to Omit Fifteen.

A man while fishing suddenly fell into the water, says *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*. A fellow-fisherman of benevolent aspect promptly helped him out, laid him on his back, and then began to scratch his head in a puzzled way.

"What's the matter?" asked the bystanders. "Why don't you revive him?"

"There are sixteen rules to revive drowned persons," said the benevolent man, "and I know 'em all; but I can't call to mind which comes first."

At this point the rescued man opened his eyes and said faintly: "Is there anything about giving brandy in the rules?"

"Yes."

"Then never mind the other fifteen."

His Gentle Hint.

"Passengers in this 'bus will do well to look after their pockets," said a London policeman, at the door of a crowded omnibus, "there are two swell thieves here."

"If that's the case," said a nervous-looking man in a choker, who looked like a clergyman, "I will get out. I cannot risk my reputation in such company."

"And I," said a respectable-looking old gentleman, with gold-headed cane and spectacles, "have too much money about me to stand the chances of being robbed."

And so they both alighted. Then the policeman said: "Drive on; they've both got out."